This newsletter presents findings from Quarter 2, 2014 evaluation of the Planning Retreat and Mid-year Participant Evaluation.

2014 PIRE Planning Retreat

The 2014 UCI Water PIRE Planning Retreat was held on Saturday, January 25, 2014 from 9:00 am – 8:30 pm in the UCI Civil and Environmental Engineering Conference Room. Participants rated the usefulness of the retreat and provided suggestions.

Usefulness of the Planning Retreat

- 24 of 28 retreat attendees completed the evaluation form
- More than half of respondents are affiliated with UCI
- Attendees found the retreat as a whole to be very or extremely useful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not useful at all</th>
<th>Slightly useful</th>
<th>Somewhat useful</th>
<th>Very useful</th>
<th>Extremely useful</th>
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How useful was the retreat to increase your knowledge about PIRE project activities?

- 4% Not useful at all
- 50% Slightly useful
- 46% Very useful

How useful was the retreat to plan and organize PIRE project activities?

- 4% Not useful at all
- 3% Slightly useful
- 46% Very useful
- 42% Extremely useful

Participants’ Suggestions to Improve Future Retreats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presenters/Attenders</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Issues to discuss</th>
<th>Improvements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orange County Water District</td>
<td>Southern California and Australia approaches</td>
<td>How to involve water districts</td>
<td>Plan further in advance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Former PIRE students</td>
<td>Storm water reuse</td>
<td>Implementation of PIRE research findings</td>
<td>Name tags</td>
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<td>Graduate students</td>
<td>Collaboration opportunities</td>
<td>UPP Down Under planning</td>
<td>Multiple days or more breaks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial partners</td>
<td>Data gathering challenges</td>
<td>Inclusion of more organizations</td>
<td>Larger or different venue</td>
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<td>Local practitioners</td>
<td>Effect of bio-remediation on salinity</td>
<td>Survey student environmental attitudes</td>
<td>Note action items and people responsible, distribute action plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern California Coastal Water Research Project</td>
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“I really appreciate being invited and meeting with other people with common goals, interests and passion. I wish to come back again.”

“Thanks for putting this together, it was a really good way to see all the parts of PIRE at once and get some discussion about the future.”

PIRE Project Next Steps

- Finding collaborators or collaborative projects to work on
- Curriculum planning and planning the undergraduate UPP Down Under program
- Project management and advancement
- Outreach components
- Continuing research and publication efforts
UCI WaterPIRE Mid-Year Evaluation

The mid-year evaluation assessed project participants’ satisfaction with project implementation and their professional growth due to participation. About 58% (47 of 81) of the participants completed the survey.

Involvement in PIRE project
• 21 people report feeling sufficiently involved in the PIRE project. Others want additional involvement:
  • Develop university partnerships
  • Conduct collaborative research
  • Develop governmental agency collaborations

Progress made towards goals
• Many believe the project is making good or great gains in all goal areas.
• More than 20% of respondents noted only a little or moderate gains, indicating room for improvement.

Project Management
Participants rated all areas of project management as good.

Leadership
Strategic planning
Inclusion of AU personnel
Organization
Inclusion of US personnel
Recruitment
Internal communication
Development of documents
Visibility to scientific community
Effective use of people
Risks identified and handled
Outreach to non-scientific community
Integration of activities to meet goals

Very Poor  Poor  Fair  Good  Very Good

Benefits of PIRE Project participation
• Improved knowledge about content and projects regarding water sustainability.
• Interaction with academic and industry professionals.
• Collaboration and research opportunities.
• Helpful experience for graduate school applications.

Evaluator’s Recommendations

2014 Planning Retreat
• Plan further in advance
• Invite more participants from various institutions to attend.
• Include presenters and topics suggested by participants.
• Use participants’ next steps to inform planning of subsequent meetings.
• Reorganize retreat agenda to include more breaks.

Mid-Year Evaluation
• Create more opportunities to collaborate with university partners, to develop additional university partnerships, conduct collaborative research, and to further develop institutional capacity.
• To improve project management, hold additional planning sessions.
• Develop forums where project participants can continue to cultivate skills.

Upcoming Evaluation Activities
• Conduct post-survey of all participants
• Conduct post-IDIs on graduate students returning from Australia.
• Conduct research abroad evaluation form with graduate students returning from Australia.
• Conduct pre-IDIs on undergraduate/graduate/postdocs going to Australia.
• Plan summer undergraduate and K-12 teacher/student program evaluations.